174 - The reward and price of total surrender, utter vulnerability, and unequivocal obedience

I have had a question before the Lord about how to explain, from the scriptures in a definitive way why some people get sick and die early, and some don't, particularly those who invoke His name and who claim to be people of faith in the Lord Yeshua. Barbara's explanation is as utterly simple as it is true: She says, "There's a place of walking with the Father where nothing can touch you."

Harold Smith sent an article recently, entitled, "Becoming Vulnerable." I'd like to read a small section of it to you:

The word 'authority' in the Greek is <code>ecksousia</code> and means (ready for this?) 'power of choice'. Of the 131 times it is used, it is translated 'power' 69 times. When we CHOOSE His Way over our way, it unleashes the power of <code>rauch hakodesh</code> (Hebrew for <code>the spirit of holiness</code>) to work on our behalf and on the behalf of others in our midst. That is the authority He has entrusted to us - and it begins with a willing heart. It was when I quit 'trying' to find my place that He took me to it - and it was right where I was. It has taken me the better part of 30 years to discover that we carry the Kingdom within us. It goes where we go. We don't have to go hunt for our 'place' in it - we <code>ARE</code> it!

If we don't try to Pre-Determine what goes on in our life, He will position us alongside those who are to be instrumental in helping us get to where we need to be - we won't need to try to find them. He will cause events to occur that will MOVE us to be positioned so that we are in a place to receive what we need for the next step - we won't need to try to figure out where He is taking us. As long as you are willing, you have given Him the permission to move on your behalf - and to move you. Stay willing, stay humble, stay contrite and you will see the awesome Power of the Living *Elohim* (original Hebrew translated as "God") bring into existence those things which are not - to PUT you where He has called you to be. Look for His Hand and He will be found of you.

In His article, Harold reminded his readers of two instances of Yeshua passing through the midst of a crowd of people who were about to lay their hands on Him.

This first instance was **Luke 4:14-30**. The narrative picks up after the Lord's trial by the sa-tan in the wilderness:

14 And Jesus returns, in the power of the spirit, into Galilee. And the fame concerning Him came out down the whole of the country about.

Now, stop right here a minute. Notice that Yeshua "returns" to Galilee, "in the power of the spirit." He didn't *leave* Galilee in that power, but after He was baptized by John and was "ejected" into the wilderness (as Mark's account records). Here's how Luke 4:1-2 reads:

- 1 Now Jesus, <mark>full of holy spirit</mark>, returns from the Jordan, and was led in the spirit in the wilderness
- 2 forty days, undergoing trial by the Adversary.

Back to the story from verse 14-20, Yeshua is now back in the town where He grew up; He is not only "full of holy spirit," He is also waking "in the power of the spirit." By now, a question may have formed in your mind as it did mine: What is the difference between you and me and Yeshua today, apart from the fact that He is the Father's only begotten Son, His firstborn, and His creative original? Before I answer that question, here's another: If you and I have been filled with the same spirit that filled Yeshua upon His baptism by John, and later that filled the apostles at Pentecost, do we – or more accurately, can we – also walk "in the power of the spirit"? The last question that comes to mind, before we return to the story, is, if we are "full of holy spirit," and we are walking "in the power of the spirit," aren't we under – or in – the Father's protection, just like Yeshua was?

Luke 4:15

15 And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.

Everyone is happy with Yeshua so far; He hasn't returned home yet...and that's where the trouble starts. Home is where family is, where everyone knew you since you were "this tall." They all think they know you, and that's where the spirit you're full of and walk in the power of is not appreciated. We ought never to think that anyone we used to know will grasp who we are today, assuming we walk as sons and daughters of YaHoVeH, as Yeshua walked. We also ought never to change who we are to suit them; when we do, we open ourselves up to their infirmities ... literally.

Luke 4:16-30

- 16 And He came to Nazareth, where He was reared, and, according to His custom on the day of the sabbaths, He entered into the synagogue and rose to read.
- 17 And handed to Him was a scroll of the prophet Isaiah, and, opening the scroll, He found the place where it was written,
- 18 "The spirit of the Lord is on Me, On account of which He anoints Me to bring the evangel to the poor. He has commissioned Me to heal the crushed heart, To herald to captives a pardon, And to the blind the receiving of sight; To dispatch the oppressed with a pardon.

- 19 To herald an acceptable year of the Lord..."
- 20 And furling the scroll, giving it back to the deputy, He is seated. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were looking intently at Him.
- 21 Now He begins to be saying to them that "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your ears."

This is a massive declaration that Yeshua just made, wouldn't you say, and we're about to see that the sa-tan, which Yeshua had triumphed over in the wilderness, is alive and well, fully functioning in the people among whom Yeshua had grown up.

22 And all testified of Him and marveled at the gracious words which are issuing out of His mouth. And they said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"

Yeshua has an excellent opportunity here, to placate these people and ingratiate Himself with them by simply making nice; by making them feel good, validated. Yeshua *could* have won everyone from his hometown over then and there; but that is neither the Father's purpose nor the action of the Spirit of Holiness that filled Yeshua – and that fills you and me today. Making people feel good about where they are in their relationship to YaHoVeH and to the Lord is not in accord with the power of the Spirit living in you and me, anymore than it was for Yeshua. On the contrary, the Spirit of YaHoVeH, which Yeshua is full of and walks in – and which you and I are full of and in which we are walking – is about to confront the sa-tan within people head-on.

Luke 4:23-30

- 23 And He said to them, "Undoubtedly you will be declaring to Me this parable: 'Physician, cure yourself!' 'Whatever we hear occurring in Capernaum do here also in your own country.'"
- 24 Now He said, "Verily, I am saying to you that no one who is a prophet is acceptable in his own country.
- 25 Now of a truth I am saying to you, that many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when heaven is locked for three years and six months, as a great famine came to be over the entire land,
- 26 and to none of them was Elijah sent, except into Sarepta of Sidonia, to a widow woman.
- 27 And many lepers were in Israel under Elisha the prophet, and none of them is cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

Yeshua is imparting a principle by recalling two examples from their own Scriptures. Rather than finding their curiosity stirred, however, everyone becomes enraged. :

28 And filled with fury are all who are in the synagogue, at hearing these things, 29 and rising, they cast Him outside of the city. And they led Him to the brow of the

mountain on which their city had been built, so as to push Him over the precipice. 30 Yet He, passing through their midst, went.

The second instance of Yeshua passing through the midst of a crowd occurs in **John 8:54-59**. To get the whole context, however, we have to start at **verse 12**. AS we go through this, like we did the section in Luke 4, look at what Yeshua is teaching people, if they had hears to hear.

John 8:12-59

Jesus speaks to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world. He who is following Me should under no circumstances be walking in darkness, but will be having the light of life."

- 13 The Pharisees, then, said to Him, "You are testifying concerning yourself. Your testimony is not true!"
- 14 Jesus answered and said to them, "And if I should be testifying concerning Myself, true is My testimony, for I am aware whence I came and whither I am going, yet you are not aware whence I am coming or whither I am going.
- 15 You are judging according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.
- 16 And yet if ever I should be judging, My judging is true, for not alone am I, but I and the Father Who sends Me.
- 17 Yet in this law, also, of yours it is written that the testimony of two men is true.
- 18 I am the One testifying concerning Myself, and the Father Who sends Me is testifying concerning Me."
- 19 They said, then, to Him, "Where is your father?" Jesus answered and said, "Neither with Me are you acquainted, nor with My Father. If you were acquainted with Me, you should be acquainted with My Father also."
- 20 These declarations He speaks in the treasury, teaching in the sanctuary, and no one arrests Him, for not as yet had come His hour.

The whole point of our study tonight is to see the conditions under which the Father establishes a hedge of protection in which no one can touch us and nothing can get to us. This hedge of protection is not earned in the way humanity perceives the term; rather, as we will see, it is part of living solely to the Lord and for the Father's purpose, holding nothing dear to ourselves, including our own lives. This is what Oswald Chambers calls, "giving up all rights to ourselves." No one can be sovereignly protected who is not first utterly vulnerable. Yeshua never protected Himself; His life was His only to lay down, not to protect or defend … that was what the Father did, because Yeshua was utterly vulnerable, because He was utterly trusting, not in people but in the Father.

- 21 He said, then, again to them, "I am going away, and you will be seeking Me, and in your sin shall you be dying. Where I am going, you can not be coming."
- 22 The Jews, then, said, "He will not kill himself, seeing that he is saying, 'Where I am going, you can not be coming'?"
- 23 He said, then, to them, "You are [out] of that which is below; I am [out] of that which is above. You are [out] of this world; I am not [out] of this world.
- 24 I said, then, to you, that you shall be dying in your sins. For <mark>if ever you should not be believing Me that I am, you shall be dying in your sins</mark>."

Can you imagine how hard that must have been to hear from someone who looks no different from any other man? Who in Sheol did this Guy think He was?

- 25 They said, then, to Him, "Who are you?" Jesus, then, said to them, "For the beginning, what I am speaking also to you. [What kind of answer is that?]
 26 Much have I to be speaking and judging concerning you, but He Who sends Me is
- true, and what I hear from Him, these things I am speaking to the world."
- 27 They know not that He said this to them of the Father.
- 28 Jesus, then, said to them again that "Whenever you should be exalting the Son of Mankind, then you will know that I am, and from Myself I am doing nothing, but, according as My Father teaches Me, these things I am speaking.
- 29 And He Who sends Me is with Me. He does not leave Me alone, for [or because] what is pleasing to Him am I doing always."

Read the last half of verse 28 and all of verse 29 again:

from Myself I am doing nothing, but, according as My Father teaches Me, these things I am speaking.

29 And He Who sends Me is with Me. He does not leave Me alone, for [or because] what is pleasing to Him am I doing always."

"From myself I am doing nothing" – "I am making none of my own choices, and I am sharing with you only what My Father teaches Me. I'm not making anything up myself; none of what I'm saying – None of it! – comes from something I thought up; everything is coming from My Father Who sent Me. What teaches Me, I'm telling you. Not only that, but He – that is, My Father – is WITH Me. You can't see Him, but He's with Me right here, right now. He doesn't leave Me alone; if every one of you walked away right now and I never saw your face again in this life, it would not matter; My Father does not leave Me alone. And why? Because I do ALWAYS what is pleasing to Him."

If you and I want to know that the Father is with us, that He does not leave us alone, then we will do ALWAYS what is pleasing to Him. This is not some method or formula to gain the Father's favor – we have that already; it's called grace. This comes

from within us as spirit-filled and spirit-led sons and daughters of YaHoVeH, as Yeshua's brethren and sisteren, to the degree that we operate out of our new humanity.

- 30 At His speaking these things, many believe in Him.
- 31 Jesus, then, said to the Jews who have believed Him, "If ever you should be remaining in My word, you are truly My disciples,
- 32 and you will know the truth [my word], and the truth will be making you free."
- 33 They answered Him, "The seed of Abraham are we, and we have never been slaves of anyone. How are you saying that 'You shall be becoming free'?"
- 34 Jesus answered them, "Verily, verily, I am saying to you that everyone who is doing sin, is a slave of sin.
- 35 Now the slave is not remaining in the house for the eon. The son is remaining for the eon.
- 36 If ever, then, the Son should be making you free, you will be really free.
- 37 I am aware that you are Abraham's seed. But you are seeking to kill Me, for [or because] My word has no room in you.
- 38 What I have seen with My Father am I speaking. You also, then, what you hear from your father are doing."
- 39 They answered and say to Him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus answered them, "If you are children of Abraham, did you ever do the works of Abraham?
- 40 Yet now you are seeking to kill Me, a Man Who has spoken to you the truth which I hear from God. This Abraham does not do.
- 41 Yet you are doing the works of your father." They say to Him, "We were not born of prostitution! One Father have we, God!"
- 42 Jesus, then, said to them, "If God were your Father, you would have loved Me. For out of God I came forth and am arriving. For neither have I come of [or from] Myself, but He commissions Me.
- 43 Wherefore do you not know My speech? Seeing that you can not hear My word.
- 44 You are of your father, the Adversary, and the desires of your father you are wanting to do. He was a man-killer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, for truth is not in him. Whenever he may be speaking a lie, he is speaking of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it.
- 45 Yet I -- seeing that I am speaking the truth, you are not believing Me.
- 46 Who of you is exposing Me concerning sin? If I am telling the truth, wherefore are you not believing Me?
- 47 He who is [out] of God is hearing God's declarations. Therefore you are not hearing, seeing that you are not [out] of God."
- 48 The Jews answered and say to Him, "Are we not saying ideally that you are a

Samaritan and have a demon?"

- 49 Jesus answered and said, "I have no demon, but I am honoring My Father, and you are dishonoring Me.
- 50 Now I am not seeking My glory. He is the One Who is seeking it and judging.
- 51 Verily, Verily, I am saying to you, If ever anyone should be keeping My word, he should under no circumstances be beholding death for the eon."
- 52 The Jews said to Him, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets, and you are saying, 'If ever anyone should be keeping my word, he should under no circumstances be tasting death for the eon.'
- 53 Not you are greater than our father Abraham who died! And the prophets died. Whom are you making yourself to be?"
- 54 Jesus answered, "If I should ever be glorifying Myself, My glory is nothing. It is My Father Who is glorifying Me, of Whom you are saying that He is your God.
- 55 And you know Him not, yet I am acquainted with Him, and if I should be saying that I am not acquainted with Him, I shall be like you, a liar. But I am acquainted with Him and I am keeping His word.
- 56 Abraham, your father, exults that he may become acquainted with My day, and he was acquainted with it and rejoiced."
- 57 The Jews, then, said to Him, "You have not as yet lived fifty years, and you have seen Abraham!"
- 58 Jesus said to them, "Verily, verily, I am saying to you, Ere Abraham came into being, I am."
- 59 They pick up stones, then, that they should be casting them at Him. Yet Jesus was hid and came out of the sanctuary. And passing through the midst of them, He went and thus passed by.

The Psalmist alluded to the hiding in **John 8:59**.

Psalm 31:19-21

Withow migreat is Your goodness Which You have stored up for those fearing You, And You have effected for those seeking refuge in You In front of the sons of humanity.

You shall conceal them in the concealment of Your presence From the coalitions of man; You shall seclude them in a booth From the dispute of tongues.

²¹ Blessed be Yahweh, For He ^cmade marvelous His benignity to me In a besieged city. We should stop here a moment, because while we have been speaking as if we may be entirely protected, as David wrote in Psalm 31 and as the accounts of Yeshua demonstrate. We must remember, however, that Yeshua was also taken, and the time came when His utter vulnerability – which He *deliberately* maintained all the way to His death – resulted in being given into the hands of ungodly, unbelieving, and evil men, to be tortured and killed.

What is the significance to you and me? While the Father may hold us in the palm of His hand, and there is a place of walking with Him where no one can touch you and nothing can harm you, there is also the sovereignty and inevitability of His purpose that may require suffering and even death.

John 16:33

These things have I spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have affliction. But courage! I have conquered the world.

Neither Yeshua nor the Father promises invulnerability in this world; Yeshua promises peace in him, while in the world, affliction is a given. At the same time, Yeshua urges us to be courageous, because He has conquered the world, which is the source of affliction.

To me, the point is not to look for or expect some kind of supernatural protection, and certainly not to get puffed up about the protection He affords us today, but to recognize that so long as you and I surrender our lives entirely to the Father's purpose, "[He] conceals [us] in the concealment of His presence," as **Psalm 31:20** says. We may, like Yeshua, pass through the midst of a crowd because it is not yet our time. We don't have to turn invisible, but we may go unnoticed. I pray that when our time comes – when my time comes – that I be found not resisting, but still surrendered, knowing that the Father is with me, and that He does not leave me alone. AMEN?

John 10:

My sheep are hearing My voice, and I know them, and they are following Me.

28 And I am giving them life eonian, and they should by no means be perishing for the eon, and no one shall be snatching them out of My hand.

29 My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to be snatching them out of My Father's hand.

30 I and the Father, We are one

Yeshua followed the Father because He and the Father were One. The Hebrew word for one is "echad," and it is that word from which the Greek translators derived their word,

"alpha," which is the root of akoloutheō, which means "follow." Are you still with me? If we are ECHAD, or one with the Lord as He is one with the Father, we are following Him; and as the Lord Himself declares, "No one shall be snatching them out of My hand … and no one is able to be snatching them out of My Father's hand."

How many times has Barbara said, He never said it'd be easy, He said He'd be with us. Yeshua said as much too, in **Matthew 7:13-14**:

"Enter through the cramped gate, 'for broad is the gate and spacious is the way 'which is leading away into 'destruction, and many are 'those entering" through it.
 Yet awhat a cramped 'gate and 'narrowed' 'way is the one leading away into 'life, and few are 'those who are finding it.

Listen to verse 14 of Matthew 7, from the Amplified Bible:

But the gate is narrow (contracted ^[a] by pressure) and the way is straitened and compressed that leads away to life, and few are those who find it.

We have looked at this many times before, but perhaps now we can better appreciate the difficulty in finding this most uncomfortable gate, let alone passing through it, which we will only do with total commitment to the Father and His purpose. We will take no thought for tomorrow, or for ourselves, what we will eat or drink. Once we have put our hands to this plough, we must not look back; we must let the dead entomb their own dead. We will shimmy our way through this gate unassisted, and we will walk this narrowed way in single file, perhaps seeing no one else on the path. I can't follow you and you can't follow me. We must be One – we must be echad – with the Lord and thereby with the Father. Then we will follow Him, and there He is with us and does not leave us alone.

Isaiah 1:18-20

goCome prnow, and let us have it corrected, Yahweh is saying. If your sins become like scarlet, as snow shall they be white; If they are red as crimson, as wool shall they become.
 If you are willing and hearken, the good of the land shall you eat,
 Yet if you are refusing and rebel, Oby the sword shall you be devoured, For the mouth of Yahweh, it has spoken.

Don't you just love the language of the Scriptures? Following the Lord – being one with Him and the Father – may be a singularly difficult challenge, but how can you pass up a phrase like this: "If you are willing and hearken, the good of the land shall you eat"? The Father teaches so much that is of ultimate value and consequence in the space of so few words; and every week for 174 Tuesdays, you and I have dined at His banquet, and He has written His words on our hearts and knit them into our characters. Bless Him. Bless His name.

Just as Yeshua took no thought for His own life, but sought only His Father's face, one of the ancient Kings of Judah did the opposite, and it cost him His position of favor with YaHoVeH. Asa, son of Abijah, son of Rehoboam, son of Solomon, son of David, was one of the good kings of Judah. He was also warned in clear terms of the consequences he would face – and all of Judah and Benjamin whom he ruled – if he stepped aside from following YaHoVeH.

2 Chronicles 15:1-4

15 *As for Azariah son of Oded, the spirit of Elohim bcame upon him, 2 and he went forth before Asa and said to him, Hear me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin! Yahweh is with you when you bare with Him. † If you seek after Him, He shall be found by you. †Yet if you forsake Him, He shall forsake you. 3 *Now for many days Israel was without the Elohim of truth, † without a priest to direct them, and without the law. 4 *But in their distress they returned onto Yahweh Elohim of Israel; † they sought Him, and He was found by them.

By the end of Chapter 15, Asa has peace everywhere, even in his own heart. Oddly, however, when Baasha king of Israel effectively blockades Judah from a fortress at Ramah. Asa failed to trust, or even call on YaHoVeH, and we see this pattern repeated throughout the Scriptures; instead, he called on Ben-hadad, king of Syria for help to defeat Baasha.

2 Chronicles 16

7 + 'At 'that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah and said to him, 'Because you leaned' on the king of Syria and did not

lean on Yahweh your Elohim, therefore the army of the king of ⁷Israel~ escaped fout of your hand. ⁸ As for the Cushites and the Libyans, ^bwere they not ³ a vast ³ army with chariots and ³ horsemen ³ in very great ^{mn}abundance⁻? ⁺Yet ⁱbecause you leaned⁻ on Yahweh, He gave them into your hand. ⁹ For, as regards Yahweh, His eyes go to and fro ⁱ through all the earth to reinforce ^{wi} the heart of those who are at peace ³ with Him. You were exceedingly unwise ^{on} in this matter; ^t so henceforth there will be wars ^{wi} against you. ^{10 +} Asa was ¹ vexed ³ by the seer, and he ¹ gave him over to the house of stocks ^t because he was ⁱ irate ^{wi} at him ^{on} about this. Asa ⁺ also ¹ maltreated some ^f of the people ⁱ at 'that time.

written on the scroll of the kings of Judah and Israel. 12 + In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa was affected with 'gangrene' in his feet until his illness became very severe. *Yet even in his illness he did not seek after 'Yahweh, 'but resorted 'to healers'. 13 + Then Asa 'lay down with his fathers; + he 'died in the forty-first year of his reign, 14 and they 'entombed him in his grand tomb "that he had dug out for himself in the city of David. + They 'laid him in the bed' "that was filled with aromatics, + all sorts of i ointments delaborately compounded. And they burned for him fr an exceedingly great funeral-fire.

2 Chronicles 16:9 is the most important verse:

For as regards Yahweh, His eyes go to and fro through all the earth to reinforce the heart of those at peace with Him.

Clearly, Asa's heart may have once been at peace with YaHoVeH, but he trusted the king of Syria's strength to deliver Judah from Israel, which YaHoVeH caused Asa to defeat earlier to the tune of 500,000 men!

Where are we going with all this? To make living constantly as one with the Father and following the Lord, if by any means, where, as Barbara says, and as the Scriptures make clear, nothing can touch you. It turns out that this position depends upon two factors, one of which you and I are entirely in charge of and one of which the Father alone determines:

- 1. Your accountability and mine is total surrender of ourselves and our lives, unequivocal obedience to the Father's word, and utter vulnerability to His purpose. Any thought for our lives, as if to take charge in any area at all, catapults us away from being one with the Father and with the Lord, and therefore makes it impossible to follow Yeshua, to get through that cramped gate or walk that narrowed way. By definition, all of these take all of our concentration, and their success our success results in pleasing the Father and reaping the highest awards at the Dais of The Anointed One in the Day of the Lord.
- 2. The Father alone knows all the details of His purpose for your life and mine; He knows our days, our breaths, and His purpose may take us by total surprise. Just as surely as we trust Him, can He trust us simply to do His will on Earth until Messiah returns? He will reinforce our hearts when we are at peace with Him. He is with us and He will not leave us alone when we are calling on Him, hearkening to Him, and obeying His instruction.

Father, I began this evening with my often-repeated question about why people get sick or have trouble in any area of their lives. It's too easy to buy the notion that we're all just human and sickness, lack or infirmity anywhere is just part of the condition. That may be true of the old humanity, but it has no place, it seems in the new humanity. Moreover, Your word, Yeshua's life, and the patterns, principles, and precedents in the Scriptures, shows clearly that our condition – spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical – is tied directly to our total surrender, our utter vulnerability, and our unflinching obedience to Your word and purpose. I pray tonight that we may find ourselves, as Yeshua did, one with You, taking charge of no area of our lives and holding nothing about them dear to ourselves. I ask you to shine your searchlight into our hearts tonight; show us where we

are thinking about our futures as if You weren't trustworthy to provide for them; what are we doing today that puts You at a distance and requires You to leave us alone. I pray that on seeing any area that needs attention, we would not rebel, but would repent immediately – change our minds – seek Your face and Your will, and move instantly according to Your leading.

The sa-tan is only as strong in us as our old humanity, with its seductive desires, wherever we are concerned for ourselves and our lives. We are only as strong in You, as sons and daughters of YaHoVeH, and as Yeshua's brothers and sisters, as our new humanity, which is being created in righteousness and looks exactly like Yeshua.

Father I pray for a renewal of strength and resolve within each of us today, to walk as closely with You that You are all we see, all we hear, and all we want. Show us our next step, whatever that may be and wherever that may lead. Finally, I pray that You will find us hearkening to your voice and obeying Your instructions just as Yeshua did, so that we are doing only what is pleasing to You, and there we find our satisfaction and our fulfillment.

In the name of the One Who gave His life for us, AMEN.